

SN 10/612,283
Amendment Dated 9/21/2007.
Reply to OA mailed 9/12/2007

Atty Docket # J103UB02US00

Amendments to the Claims/Listing of the Claims

Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method operable on a computer for automatically selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising the steps of:
 - storing item characteristics for a plurality of items;
 - storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics;
 - receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for a shipment, the shipment comprising at least one package shipping by mail;
 - retrieving a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items;
 - storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to specified items;
 - automatically determining a number of packages comprising the shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package
 - determining, the determining step carried out based on the identifiers, the stored item characteristics corresponding to the identifiers and the postal costs for packages. selected characteristic, if a single package containing the plurality of items will exceed a desired postal rate;
 - if the single package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging the plurality of items in a single package;
 - if the single package will exceed the desired postal rate, dividing, based on the selected characteristic, the customer order into multiple sub-orders, each sub-order including a subset of the plurality of items selected so that the sub-order will be at the desired postal rate,
 - printing a mailer including a control indicia on the mailer,
 - automatically selecting, based on the control indicia, items for inclusion in each sub-order, and
 - packaging each of the sub-orders individually so that the customer order comprises multiple packages; and
 - mailing the single or multiple packages to the customer.

SN 10/612,283
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2. (original) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.
3. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the selected said stored item characteristic includes at least one of: ~~characteristic is chosen from the group comprising: item weight, item thickness and item size.~~
4. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 further including ~~wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of:~~
~~printing respective mailers, each mailer corresponding to a package for the shipment, each mailer defining customer selected items to comprise the corresponding package; a mailer for each sub-order;~~
~~placing each mailer on an assembly line; and~~
~~placing each customer selected item in comprising each package sub-order on the associated corresponding mailer as the mailer traverses the assembly line.~~
5. (original) A method in accordance with claim 4 wherein:
each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer;
each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side a customer address.
6. (original) A method in accordance with claim 5 wherein the assembly line comprises:
a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer;
a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like items; and
a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an item from a hopper onto a mailer.

SN 10/612,283
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Atty Docket # J103UB02US00

7. (original) A method in accordance with claim 6 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
8. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 7 wherein the further comprising a step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes shrink-wrapping each of the packages sub-orders in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.
9. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 4 4 wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of placing each mailer on an assembly line,
packaging each of the sub-orders.
10. (currently amended) A system for selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising:
 - a processor;
 - a memory connected to the processor, the memory storing data and instructions for controlling the operation of the processor; the processor operative to perform the steps of:
 - storing item characteristics for a plurality of items;
 - storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics;
 - receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for a shipment shipping by mail;
 - retrieving, from the memory, a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items;
 - storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to items to comprise the shipment;

SN 10/612,283
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Atty Docket # J103UB02US00

automatically determining a number of packages comprising the shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package;

the determining step carried out determining, based on the identifiers and the postal costs for packages, selected characteristic, if a single package containing the plurality of items will exceed a desired postal rate;

if the single package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging the items in a single package;

if the single package will exceed the desired postal rate, dividing, based on the selected characteristic, the customer order into multiple sub-orders, each sub-order including a subset of the plurality of items selected so that the sub-order will be at the desired postal rate;

printing a mailer including a control indicia on the mailer,

automatically selecting, based on the control indicia, items for inclusion in each sub-order, and

packaging each of the sub-orders individually so that the customer order comprises multiple packages; and

mailing the single or multiple packages to the customer.

11. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.
12. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the selected characteristic is chosen from the group comprising: item weight, item thickness and item size.
13. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 further including an assembly line and wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of printing a mailer for each sub-order;
 - placing each mailer on the assembly line; and
 - placing each item in each sub-order on the associated mailer as the mailer traverses the assembly line.

SN 10/612,283
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Atty Docket # J103UB02US00

14. (original) A system in accordance with claim 13 wherein:
 - each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer;
 - each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side a customer address.
15. (original) A system in accordance with claim 14 wherein the assembly line comprises:
 - a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer;
 - a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like items; and
 - a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an item from a hopper onto a mailer.
16. (original) A system in accordance with claim 15 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
17. (original) A system in accordance with claim 16 wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes shrink-wrapping each of the sub-orders in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.
18. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of packaging each of the sub-orders.

19 – 22 (Canceled)

Page 7 of 10